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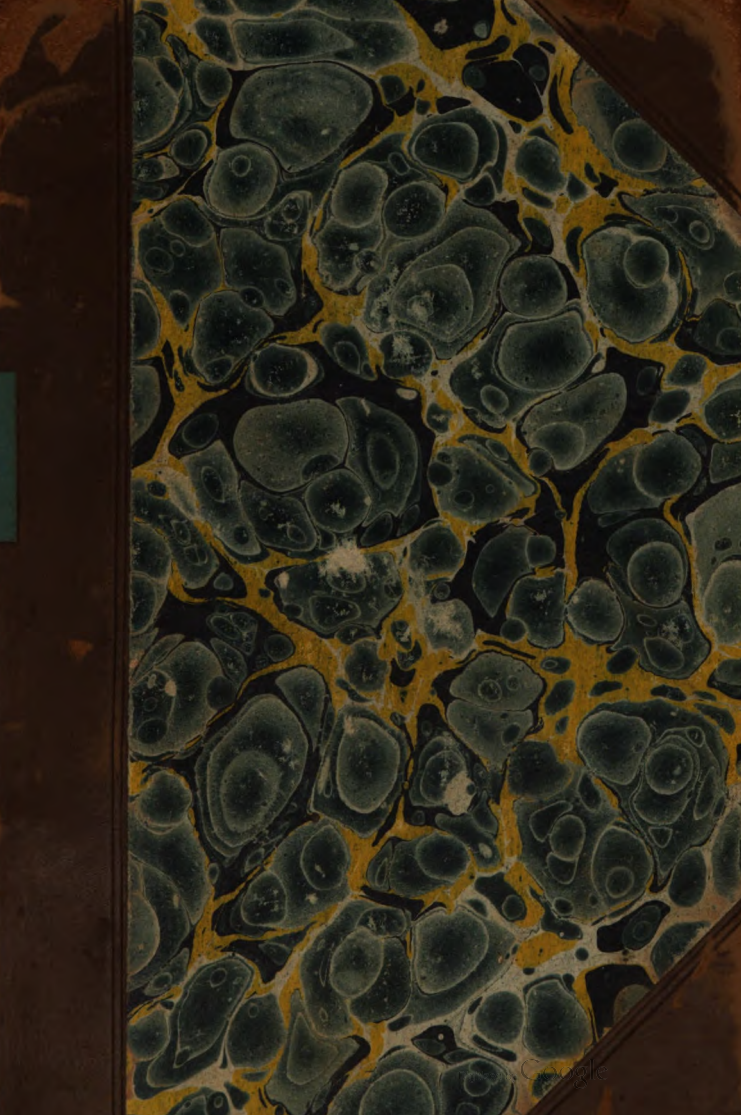
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1829,

A Poem.

Preparing for Publication,

BY THE AUTHOR OF "1829,"

CLAVIS SCIENTIÆ;

A KEY TO THE TEMPLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

A Treatise suggesting a more easy and practicable mode of acquiring a general knowledge, with directions for a course of Study on a new plan. •

v

1829 :

1830

A Poem,

BY EDWARD W. COX,

AUTHOR OF "THE OPENING OF THE SIXTH SEAL."

Dogb. This is your charge ; you shall comprehend all vagrom men,
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

LONDON :

**PRINTED FOR SAMUEL MAUNDER,
10, NEWGATE STREET.**

71.

LIBRARY OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF



TO
ARTHUR, DUKE OF WELLINGTON,

WHO HAS

RENDERED **1829** ETERNALLY ILLUSTRIOUS,

The Following *Critique,*

WITH ALL RESPECT,

IS DEDICATED.

PROLOGUE.

WHY may not folly be exposed to derision, and vice held up to detestation, without invading the hallowed sanctuary of private life, and, with the aid of that police-officer of literature, "Satire," dragging individuals from their privacy, and arraigning them at the bar of ill-natured wit before a prejudiced judge? Such a question has been repeatedly propounded, and, we believe, has not yet received a reply. It is trusted that the following trifle may be found, in some measure, an answer to the query. As an attempt to pursue a new, perhaps more noble, path, than is commonly followed in the treatment of such

a subject, may a hope be expressed that it will find favour, if not protection. The Author feels that he is treading untried ground, whereon he knows not whether the next step will plunge him into the mire, or place him upon an enviable eminence; he is therefore willing to advance with caution,—with confidence he cannot. He is in doubt what to term a production of so anomalous a character. It is not a satire, for it is deeply tinctured with sadness,—a wreath made up of flowers and those leaves that are the emblems of melancholy. Nor is it an elegy; for its gravity is everywhere interspersed with gayety. The unsatisfactory title, “A Poem,” would, therefore, alone include its every design. The Author presents this novel scheme to the Public with all humility, and, if he be the first to offer, in one poem, a compound of Philosophy, Morality, Literature, Politics, and Satire with-

out personality, he trusts that the purity of his intentions will excuse the temerity of his attempt and the imperfections of its execution. Whatever may be its fortunes, it designs to aid the cause of *real* virtue, and fearlessly to exhibit *truth* to the eye of the reader; and how could it appear to greater advantage than in the engaging garb of poetry? Certainly, the volume has assumed a more serious character than was originally intended; but, as the Author proceeded, the aspect of the times became so gloomy that it tinged him with much of its melancholy, and, truly, seemed to present little scope for jest or ridicule; let us hope, however, that the close of another year will offer a brighter and happier prospect. He is free to confess that, under the mask of novelty and variety, he was desirous of infusing a few grains of wholesome philosophy,—as the skilful nurse disguises

the medicine in a sweetmeat, and lures the child to drink the healing draught by tempering it with sugar. So great was the press of matter, that had he, in this volume, but touched ever so lightly upon a tenth part of it, he would have wearied the reader, the printer, and himself; but, if fortune should so favour this attempt that the British Public receive it kindly, he sees no obstacle to a continuation of it under the several titles of "1830," "1831," &c. This being the first essay, of course the writer could but glance at the more important topics of the times; and, as it was a style as yet untried, he was willing to prove the way around him, by alighting on the more prominent objects, before he gave himself to the infinite of thought to sport with the lighter, less palpable, and more minute things that float there; like the spider, who may be observed to sweep the air with his

feelers, and bind his threads to walls and other large bodies, before he entrusts their frailty to dust and straws. Accordingly, the Author finds that, in addition to new matter which the events of the succeeding year will yield, much of the past yet remains to be noted. The Parliamentary and Literary Portraits may be continued, *ad infinitum*; the follies of the age are numberless, and these, with an additional stock of morality and philosophy, gleaned from a little reading and a little thought, will, perhaps, with the reader's good will, when Christmas comes again, offer "1830" to his notice as a continuation of "1829."

P. S.—Being averse to what is, significantly enough, termed book-making, the Author has omitted many Notes and Memorandums, which might otherwise have found a place. He is

willing to try whether (provided the matter be approved) a cheap and popular dress in which to clothe it will not ultimately prove more beneficial than the costly margins and spaces which the generality of modern poems display. He would add that, being compelled, by the temporary nature of the subject, to hasten its completion, he was necessarily disabled from giving to it that mature deliberation which the Public have a right to require, and which it is the duty of the Author to yield. It was commenced at a very late period of the year, and, consequently, he was obliged to send it to the press without those emendations which another volume of the kind shall certainly receive.

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ERRATA.

Page 35, lines 8 and 9, read thus :

Green grow the vales ; upon the grey woods *steal*

More varying tints than *sunset skies reveal*.

Page 98, last line :

For *rhymea*, read rhymes.

1829.

**FAREWELL to thee, Old Year, upon whose brow
The heaviness of age is gathering now !
Friend of the few and hope of many, why
Thus flags thy wing and droops thy sightless eye ?
Being of hope and promise, seen far off,—
Seen near, the wonder of the wise—the scoff
Of fools ; the cursing and the curs'd ; the best—
The worst of friends, as haply thou hast bless'd
Or frown'd upon us ;—ere thou part from me,
Once, with my glass, old friend, farewell to thee !**

**Time, in his giant march, hath trac'd one more
Deep footprint on Eternity's dark shore.**

B

Touch'd by his hand, 'mid joy, and care, and strife,
How many forms have started into life !
And, 'neath the mighty shadow of his wing,
How many a once-loved one is slumbering !—
Beings on whom the young year smil'd so bright,—
Glad eyes now lock'd in everlasting night,—
Kind hearts that dream'd not of their early doom,—
Fair cheeks, now mould'ring in the voiceless tomb,—
Old friends, young love, the blessing and the bless'd,—
The wise, the good, have sought their dreamless rest,
Since first, with hope-crown'd brow and promise fair,
Thou did'st come down to dwell with us, Old Year !

Then be it mine, while now the sunless day
With Winter's frosty frown hath pass'd away,—
While hoarse without is heard the voice of night
Speaking in storms ; and, hospitable sight !
Within, the hearth-flame flings its flickering glare
On all the lifeless things around me here ;
Till in the dancing shadows I espy
Strange forms that flit before the musing eye,

And the dull room full-peopled seems to be
With sportive Fancy's phantom imagery;—
While soft and soothing silence round me reigns,
Save the drops pattering on the window-panes,
Lulling, not waking from the blissful dreams
Of noon-tide walks by summer's shadiest streams—
Of Spring's young green, contrasting strangely now
With Winter's blustering breath and cloud-crown'd
brow;—

Of friends far distant—of the loved, the lost,
Perchance on some wild ocean tempest toss'd,
Till, starting from the vision, through the gloom
I gaze and recognise my little room.

Then be it mine, while thus reclining here,
To read the records of the dying year,
With a reflective and impartial eye
And that pure spirit of philosophy
That doth despise the pomp of titled state,
At once discern the little from the great,—

View all things as they are, yet view them so
As best becomes a world of weal and woe :
Enduring much, forgiving much, and fain
To try excuses till excuse is vain ;—
Slow to condemn, and prompt, where praise is due,
To give it, though unclaim'd ;—well pleas'd to strew
With flowers, not thorns, the pilgrim path of life,
At best with ills enough to grieve for rife ;
Enduring harmless folly with a smile ;—
But, when injustice seems to thrive awhile,
Indignant rise, with Truth's Ithuriel spear,
Yet tempering indignation with a tear.
Of such philosophy invoking aid,
With glowing soul and fingers half afraid,
The chaste satiric lyre and virtuous song
That in the Muses' bowers have slumber'd long,
With trembling and with awe approach we now.
Haste, boys, and bind a chaplet for the brow,
Woven of flowers, for them, the good, the fair,
That came to bless both us and thee, Old Year !

With the sad cypress and the church-yard yew,
Commix the wreath for them, alas ! not few,
Who, like light visions vanishing at dawn,
Have from our gay and social circle gone ;
Mingle the fragrant laurel for the great
In arts, arms, knowledge, politics, or state ;
Bay for the bard whom certain genius fires,
Whom Nature governs, and the Muse inspires ;—
Of these the chaplet wreath and through the whole
Infuse the soft emotions of the soul.

With this, then, stand ye nigh, while we retrace
A chapter of the story of man's race ;—
A little length'ning of the various tale
That centuries of years have writ to pale
The manliest cheek with that dire record traced
In characters that may not be effaced.
What, though our tale be almost bloodless now,
Blood is not swept from off the passionate brow.
What, though the war-fiend slumber for awhile,
He hath not chang'd his fierceness for a smile.

What, though, with sword and devastating hands,
Armies have gone not over groaning lands—
Save one alone !—Yet think not that the heart
Of man is sooth'd to play a gentle part ;—
No ! the dark seeds of fury are not dead,—
They do but slumber in their restless bed.
Slumber ? Oh, no ! they cannot sleep, for they—
They know no rest—*they* sleep not, night nor day ;
And, even now, in secret are they shown
In all the vices that infest the town.

It is, indeed, a fearful thing to scan
With too nice scrutiny the ways of man ;
There is much more of ill and misery
In that we see not, than in that we see.
Who walks through life as through a wilderness,
With few to bless him, and with few to bless,—
Who gazes on the peopled desert round,
Yet thinks himself alone, and hears no sound,
Though myriad murmurs from the busy throng
About him wander as he goes along ;—

Him all in vain the oft-repeated tale
Of woe *he* never dream'd of may assail ;
In vain for him the pen may seek to trace
The thousand evils that afflict his race,—
Those silent signals of despair that speak
So eloquently on the sunken cheek,—
The solitary tears that frequent roll,—
The voiceless language of the sorrowing soul ;
For such he may not understand whose eye
Over the vast world wanders vacantly,
Nor in his pride or power will deign behold
The dross that mingles with the purest gold.

And some—nay, not a few, for fourscore years
Will travel groaning through this “ vale of tears ;”
Loathing their lot, thus doom'd to dwell forlorn
Where the long night of sorrow knows no morn,
And where a desert, with the curse of Heaven,
A God of Mercy unto man hath given ;—
To man, fore-doom'd to toil and sweat in vain,
To wake and weep, then sink to sleep again ;—

From the hard earth, with weariness and strife,
To glean the scanty pittance of his life.
Away ! away ! who read the Scriptures so ;—
'Tis ye would drug the cup of life with woe,—
Ye, who in sunshine and in summer, still
At morn, noon, night, can image naught but ill ;
Who frown when others smile, like clouds that sleep
Upon the bosom of the summer deep ;
Which, though they threaten not themselves, can raise
A withering thought of wrecks of other days.
Clouds of life's cheerful hours, away ! away !
Linger not here to blight youth's merry May ;
Nor think, because with jaundiced eyes ye view
The face of Nature clad in sickliest hue,
That there be none who see ten thousand charms
Imprinted there, and rush into her arms.

And some—it is a generous folly—find
Hope of all good in man, or think they find ;
Fondly they dream perfection dwells within,
Though shrouded now beneath the veil of sin,

Which, in the course of time, as years revolve
And learning's torch is kindled, shall dissolve
And pass away, and leave the unsullied soul
With scarce a shadow of its frailty, whole,
Glorious, and great,—as when a breeze hath driven
The envious mists of evening from the heaven :
Slowly at first and heavily they move,
As the wind's breath breathes on them from above ;
But, as they roll, more swift they speed their flight,
Unfolding, one by one, the gems of night,
Till in the middle heaven her radiant queen,
Throned in her beauty, calm and clear is seen ;
Then all the earth gleams out in the pure vest
Of the so soft and silvery moonshine dress'd :
Rocks, rivers, trees, in silent sweetness lie,
A chasten'd splendour stealing from the sky,
Seeming but spiritual and shadowy there,
The disembodied beings of the air,
Yet with enough of earth in them to show
That, though so pure, their birth-place was below.

Others there are who not less fondly deem
That man in vain may struggle with the stream
Of inundating evil, till at length,
With fruitless struggles worn, and spent his strength,
Receding in the scale of being fast,
An utter misery he will meet at last.
Unquiet must he be who thus can read
The tale of man,—a very wretch indeed;—
If he be good, benevolent, and kind,
The fearful thought must darken all his mind;
If he be more than man, he still must feel
That soften'd sorrow angels may reveal;
If he be less, oh! who but demons smile
And shout while viewing virtue's funeral pile?

And some there are—though few they be—yet still
There are, who steer a middle course 'twixt ill
Incurable and perfect good, and hold
Nor with the age of iron nor of gold.
With them, I dare confess, my thoughts have stray'd,
When roaming pathless through the woodland glade,

Musing of life in all its various forms,
Or cloth'd in sunshine, or begirt with storms,
I have look'd up to the huge arch of sky,
For things accurs'd too grand a canopy;—
And on the glowing earth around me there,
Kiss'd by the gentle stirring of the air,—
The harmony of birds—the perfect rest
That dwells upon the lake's transparent breast;
The tall majestic tree—the innocent flower,—
The moss-clad hedge-row and the tangled bower,—
And glorious things esteemed them!—Can it be
That these were given to mock our misery?
Oh! can it be that all this pride of bloom
Is but a garland twined upon a tomb?

This is our creed;—that the all-bounteous God
Hath given this earth to be the brief abode
Of reasonable beings, born to share
Alike the burden man is doom'd to bear;—
Doom'd not by some so fearful frown of fate,
But by the frailty of his mortal state,

By that unerring law, "that all things tend
Through ways the wisest to a gracious end."
And, if we gaze around us with a mind
Assured of this great maxim, we shall find
Enough of mercy in the wondrous whole,
To glad, refine, and elevate the soul.
But then we must not look as most men look
On the unfolded page of Nature's book,
Glance at the capitals so great and rare,
But pass the thousand words imprinted there
In type so small that he who would peruse
Must pause and ponder on each letter's use ;
But all occasions seek to contemplate
The lights and shadows of the human state.
And not on man alone our thoughts should dwell :
All the created things around us tell
A tale of harmony and love that we
Have never dream'd of, straying heedlessly
Through life's gay path, ner list'ning to the voice
That bids the soul to wonder and rejoice ;

Those accents from the grosser sense that dart
Inaudible, but whisper to the heart,
When sympathy hath strung its chords to take
The tone of feeling those soft voices wake,—
Like that responsive music which the strings
Of sister lutes make, when some minstrel flings
O'er one his fingers, twining melody
To which the other breathes a soft reply.

We look on man;—much is there we would
weep,
But wonder soothes the swelling sigh to sleep ;
For still we find that equal-handed Heaven
To all like means of happiness hath given.
Their's is the punishment if haply they
Have from the proffer'd blessing turn'd away ;
For who may say if there be found below
That awful inequality of woe
That an unthoughtful gazer deems to dwell
Among us, making earth a very hell,

Its lord a tyrant, whose unjust decree
Hath doom'd to man such partial misery.
Presumptuous he who thus would judge of God,
The merciful, the good ;—from *this* abode
Dare to proclaim him pityless and blind,
And not the All-seeing, glorious, just, and kind.

There is an heaven on earth—by mercy given
To cheer our steps,—or something nigh to heaven.
For what can we conceive of that glad home
Where hunger, thirst and sorrow, cannot come,
But as a place of spiritual delight
After the darkness of our sensual night ;
Whose every joy shall be the joy of soul,
Deep contemplation and those thoughts that roll
At times even here before the abstracted mind,—
Like shapes in clouds swept onward by the wind,
Dim and uncertain, yet enough to impress
A feeble image of their awfulness.
Praise is the pleasure of that glorious place,
And its most perfect happiness to trace

The ways of the Great Spirit, every where
Diffused and gladd'ning ocean, earth, and air.
Our whole existence meditation all,
Our bodiless enjoyment to recall
The ecstatic feelings of the past, which fain
We would bewail, but that they come again
In their original splendour robed, as first
Upon us they in dazzling brightness burst.
Then other thoughts come thronging and we see
Creation's perfect good and harmony ;
The fitness of all things for that great end
To which, with certain rectitude, they tend :
The countless glories that are everywhere
Invisible to man in earth and air ;
The voices he can hear not and the forms
That waft his zephyrs and impel his storms ;
That wander with him in his walks, when praise
Goes up from his glad heart and he would raise
An eye of thankfulness and pride above,
And wonder why thus comes the stream of love

Sweeping through all his soul, in such full tide,—
Nor dreams that now there linger'd by his side
They who have mingled prayer with prayer and
sent
The voice of homage through the firmament.

If then, indeed, our hope of heaven be such,
Or less divine, or more enchanting much,
May we not find some most excelling bliss
On earth that shall be somewhat like to this?
Not so unsullied,—for corporeal clay
Doth heavily upon the spirit weigh
And chain its too proud pinions, that would soar
Where none but angels ever trod before;
But an imperfect image of the joy
That after will be, without earth's alloy;
Like those faint glories often we espy,
Painted upon the black and cloud-cloth'd sky,
When the bow spans the frowning arch and seems
To wear Hope written on its radiant beams;

Far off, a shadow of its beauty, steals
A second bow, that faint but fair reveals
The soft and delicate hues that shine so bright
In its more perfect parent arch of light.

Ask you how man this glorious end may find ?
By rousing all the energies of mind ;
Striving to make his deathless spirit such,
That it shall vibrate to the softest touch,
And take its key-note from the tenderest tone
Of sympathy with joys not yet its own.
By soul from sense abstracting, seeking more
To dwell in contemplation, and adore,
And meditate, and read the written page
Of Nature beautiful in youth or age.
In brief, be it his aim to emulate,
So far as mortal may, that high estate
That shall be his hereafter, when the hand
Of death hath led him to that heavenly land.

To such the world is one unfailing store
Of things to love, contemplate, and adore.
Naught there is found of them unworthy, naught
But is with thousand secret natures fraught.
What fools may call the trivial and the mean,
Are beautiful exceedingly, thus seen ;
And the minutest of God's works may be
A boundless food for their philosophy.
They look upon the morning and descry
Much more than meets the inconsiderate eye ;
For there is mingled with its hues the soul
That lives, and glows, and vibrates through the whole ;
They hear the voice of Seraphs in the stream
That murmurs through the meadows, and they dream
Of what and where it hath been. In the wind
Are holy contemplations, and they find
A language in the lifeless things around,—
A music stealing through the air,—a sound
Of rapture in the silence,—and a hymn
In the still midnight and the moonshine dim.

Nor less such myriad mystic meanings lie
In things invisible to human eye.
The mind of man in every various form,
When sunshine soothes it, or when clouds deform,
Unknowing or unknown, by learning lit,
Or when the mist of ignorance veileth it—
The proudest and the lowliest—every state
Of being, from the prince's high estate,
To him who, friendless and forlorn, may roam
Over the world, without a hearth or home ;—
The infant's thoughts, frail childhood's hopes and fears,
The voiceless feelings of the youth whom years
Have kiss'd into maturity,—the sage
And sombre meditations of old age,—
Those deep unutterable imaginings
That, woven of all hues, on vivid wings
Float through the infinite of fancy, free
As winds that wander without boundary ;—
These, these to trace, and learn from them the ways
Of God—how great, how worthy of all praise !

To seek and find, and seek and find again,
No hope deceitful and no labour vain ;
To dwell incessantly amid the love
That we see sent profusely from above ;
To learn that life is not so drugg'd with ill
But that much happiness is mingled still,—
That there is glory in the great design,
That fools call curs'd, but angels hail divine ;
Surely, if such a privilege be given,
Of all earth's joys this is the highest heaven.

Such is our creed.—Good reader, of all these
Arrayed above, make choice of which you please.

Cold blows the north-wind through the frozen street,
And muffled forms with hasty accents greet
The new-born year, as if they could not now,
But *would*, wear pleasure written on the brow.
With chattering teeth, lips purple-dyed, and hands
In pockets cas'd, the shivering urchin stands ;

And, whilst he tries his feet upon the slide,
If chance a school friend bounding to his side,
“Happy new year t’ye, Tom;”—his kindling eye
Laughs up, and mocks the frownings of the sky ;
For he, in his youth’s pride, of future days
Dreams heedless, and unfaithful Hope displays
The promises of honour, love, and name,
Increasing stature and increasing fame,
And, in a moment, myriad shadows pass,
All clothed in sunshine, o’er her flattering glass.

See yon two tottering friends, whose withered brows
Are thinly strewn with Time’s unwilling snows ;
With toothless lips they lisp the greeting fair,
And, with a grim smile, hail the infant year.
“I wish thee many of them, George,” one sighs ;
“The same to you :” his aged friend replies ;
And, for those thoughts, for utterance all too deep,
They nod adieu and turn away to weep.

Oh, to how many is the midnight chime
That marks the never-ceasing march of Time,
A knell of death, a summons to the tomb—
A warning of the inevitable doom.
Whilst slow and solemn through the night it swings,
Speaking aloud to all created things,
Oh ! who may say that he will hear again
That peal of mingled pleasantness and pain.
There will be sorrow, where is gladness now,—
A line will be upon the smooth fair brow :
The social round will feel, not say, that one,
Perchance the gayest of the gay, is gone.
Before the hearth will be a vacant chair,
And she—the beautiful—where is she—where ?
Woe will have written somewhat on the cheek,—
The strong will feel his late light foot more weak,—
The old—they will have pass'd away ;—the young—
An added shade will on their brows be flung,—
The boy will take the vigour of the man,—
Nay, let the bright eye sparkle while it can !

But still they have been, who are not ;—they were
That are not now, when last our revel here
We held, and welcom'd in the new-born year.

Cold through the street the biting north wind blows,
Heavily laden with incumbent snows ;
Hoarse screams the blast and sunless is the day,
And from the fields all life hath pass'd away,—
Save sometimes glancing from the ivied tree,
A blackbird flitting o'er the ice-bound lea,
Or solitary red-breast drooping now
With muffled wing upon some hawthorn bough.
The streams are prisoned in their fonts, nor make
The pleasant music they were wont to wake ;
Soft on the twigs the fleecy flakes recline,
Clothing the landscape with a silver shine,
That, sleeping thus with desolation there,
Seems like Hope's signal beaming through despair.
Bring forth the bowl, and higher still, and higher,
Pile, boy, for us, the cheerful Christmas fire ;

Close the strong doors against the cold : this night
We dedicate to unalloy'd delight.
Yet, if there be a homeless wanderer worn
With age, ache, travel, penury, or scorn,
Lift up the envious latch and let him in,—
There will not be less joyfulness within ;
The weary traveller never comes in vain,—
The stranger's blessing is the good man's gain.
Now for the grateful song, whose liveliest tone
Is caught from feelings answering to its own ;—
And then the tale of love or sorrow, rife
With all the sad realities of life ;
Or story, scarce more grateful, though more glad,
Of fairy revels in the forest had
Under the oak, when soft on hill and vale
The waning moon sends down her shadows pale ;
Or of the battle or the knights of old,
Of venturous war-feats, or encounters bold,
Of giants, genii, or those witching lands
Where miracles are wrought by mortal hands

And all enchantments dwell; or, yet more strange,
The history of those awful things that range
The earth at midnight hour and do and say
Such deeds as dare not meet the dawn of day.
But why that eye so bright, that cheek so pale?
Cheer up, my children, it is but a tale.
Music, awaken your mysterious powers
And shed new life upon the festive hours,—
Hand knit with hand in kind communion sweet,
Tempt the light boundings of your little feet,
And, as ye trip along the floor, will I
Follow the mazy circlets with mine eye.

Long lingers winter with us, cold and drear,
Ruling with iron rod the infant year;
That, when the young spring smiling floats along,
Borne on the wings of Hope, with joy and song,
Vainly her eloquent voice its magic tries,
To lure the proud usurper from the skies;
Who yields not, but with banners wide unfurl'd,
And such incessant shouts as shake the world;

While, as vain war he wages to the last,
Her breath is strangely mingled with *his* blast.*

“ It shall be done, Louisa, as you say.
We’re off for London, John !”—“ When, sir ?”—“ To-day.

The carriage instantly !”—“ Yes, sir.” “ My dear,
The town will blight that rosy cheek, I fear.”

“ No matter, Henry ;—we must do, you know,
As others do, and so, perforce, must go.

How Lady Bab would laugh were we to stay
In this dull place, and plague the endless day

With sentimental common-places, books,
And all the vulgar tribe of loving looks.—

In sooth, it would be fine for you and I
To live like hermits (then a deep-drawn sigh) ;

While Mrs. Crab, and Lady Long, and all
That one, with due regard to birth, may call

* It will be recollected that the spring of 1829 was remarkably late, cold, and windy.

Genteel, are gone to taste the town, and share
Those pleasures which we cannot dream of here.”
“ E’en as you will !” the chop-fallen husband sighs ;—
“ That’s like my Henry !” the fond wife replies.

Urge now the horses ;—swifter than the wind
Whirl the hot wheels, and home is far behind.
Mac Adam, hail ! Oh, were I to rehearse
One half thy merits in my humble verse,
Though smooth should flow the stream of song
divine,
As if it travell’d over roads of thine,
Still would the founts of life and feeling fail,
E’er I had number’d half the wondrous tale.
Immortal enemy of stone and hill,
Oh, that my strength were equal to my will !
Happy the world to which thy shade shall go,
If thou do there as thou hast done below ;
For sure I am that on the brow of night
No star hangs out its beacon-lamp of light,

But would a paradise more perfect shine,
Levell'd and dusty with that art of thine.—
Nay, if the work could be survey'd by thee,
Thou'dst cut a roadway through eternity !

Swift whirl the wheels, and fast the chariot flies,
And curiosity inflames all eyes ;
Wide ope the gates are flung and everywhere
The village wonders and the travellers stare.
O'er hill and dale the smoking steeds they urge,
Nor spare the spur, nor rest the reeking scourge:—
“ Ah !” says the sighing dame, “ I hear Lord ——er
Drives at the rate of thirteen miles an hour.”
“ Well,” groans the patient bridegroom, “ well, what
then ?”
“ Why, love,—heigh-ho !—we travel only ten.”

Arrived at length, a splendid house they take
In Grosvenor Square, for reputation's sake ;
Then a fine gang of thieves in livery hire,
And madam struts it to her heart's desire.

'Twixt cards and calls she almost can contrive,
Spite of ennui, to keep herself alive
Through the interminable morning sent,
She half believes, to be man's punishment.

But see, where comes, in questionable shape,
A modern rival of the travell'd ape;—
A parody of man—a tailor's tool—
A walking pattern-block—a gaudy fool—
A living libel on the human race—
A nondescript in person, form, and face,
Encompass'd with the follies fashion shows,
Where all the wit is wasted on the clothes.
A collar nicely curved—cravat whose tie
Proclaims him master of the mystery ;
Seven rings—a cane—a ribbon, and a glass,
Useful to cut a friend, or quiz a lass ;
Yet more, who carrieth, on certain days,
The newest style of figure-forming stays—
A fashionable Stultz—a snow-white pair
Of gloves encircling fingers quite as fair ;

A kerchief that hath stolen from the rose
The grateful odours that assail the nose;
A checker'd shirt through silken mazes seen,
A sparkling diamond peeping out between ;
A leg as goodly as may be ; a face
Agreeing with the person and the place,
Not wholly ugly and yet nothing rare,—
At least as far as we may see for hair.
A truthless braggart, arrogant and proud,
Who fears in secret what he dares aloud ;
A buckram figure, stiff and starch'd,—a fool .
That hath outgrown the discipline of school—
Conceit personified—an empty ass
Who studies much, but always in his glass.

“ Where can my angel linger ? ” sighs the wife ;
“ Heavens ! but for him how tedious were my life !
The charming creature,—gods ! what graceful ways
He has, and then what pretty things he says ;—
His whiskers, too ! his figure tall and slim !
Why—twenty husbands would not equal him !

Oh ! that I were in France, for there'' — a sigh
Just then disturbs her sad soliloquy.
A moment and the man is at her feet,
Whom she had long'd so ardently to meet.
He, with the small artillery of love,
Tries every art his passion to approve ;
While she, well skilled to make her conquest sure,
Allows a little, but withholds much more.
Thus they in trivial talk contrive to slay
A tedious quarter of the tedious day.

Night, sable queen, at length appears again,
With thousand charms and pleasures in her train ;
Then are the toilet's labours, which shall be,
For beauty's sake, enwrapp'd in mystery.
Almack's—the opera—the ball—the rout—
Cards—music—dancing—wear the long night out ;
And morning looks on faces that disclose
The borrow'd bloom that emulates the rose,
On the pale ghosts of past smiles,—on eyes red,
On eyelids drooping and the aching head ;

Vanish the visions—where is beauty gone ?
Why find we age and ugliness alone ?

So have I seen, when wanes the dewy night,
The pale moon shedding her delusive light,
Where ruins mock the tyrant touch of Time,
And linger yet—still holy—still sublime.
As soft o'er them the silvery shadow steals,
And the eye sees but as the spirit feels,
Die the dark weeds,—the ivy disappears,—
Backward we wander on the tide of years ;
New strength is given to the tottering pile,—
Once more the palace splendours seem to smile :
Domes rise again and unsubstantial towers
Nod to the guardians of the silent hours.
Sudden sweet music echoes through the hall
And oft we hear the drowsy warder's call ;
Dark through the gloom uncertain forms are seen,—
All things as fancy whispers may have been.
If, while we gaze, the eastern hill-tops glow,
The light day's herald to the plains below,

The moonshine mingles with the twilight gray,
Melts into morn and vanishes away ;
Then the pale vision passes, and we see—
And seeing, sigh—the sad reality ;—
Time-stricken aisles—the moss-bedappled stone,
Two sister columns left to pine alone ;
And here and there a pillar in its pride,
Reckless of scars such gay green garlands hide.

But, while thus fares the fashionable wife,
How with the husband wears the yoke of life ?
Home hath no charms for him where love is not,
And all the sweets of friendship are forgot ;—
Where hollow smiles betray the unwelcome guest
And send a thousand tortures through his breast ;
Those withering smiles that only serve to show
How little of affection lies below,
Like that false fruit beside the Dead Sea seen,*
All bloom without, but bitterness within.

* “ Like Dead-Sea fruits that tempt the eye,
But turn to ashes on the lips.”—MOORE.

Home hath no joys for him and therefore thence
He flies, to revel in the joys of sense ;
Though that best love be gone that should be his,—
Though past the vision of domestic bliss,
The purchas'd smile, the bought caress remain—
Oh ! never, never was love wrong'd in vain !

Morning ; and, deigning not adieu, he bends
His careless steps to where his new-found friends
Lounge in the green-room of the theatre,
Whispering soft nothings in some willing ear.
Or, if perchance his fav'rite be not come,
He goes to greet the ruling star at home.
There, like an empress sits she, throned in state,
While dense around her suppliant subjects wait ;
Princes appear amid the gallant throng,
Paying their homage to the queen of song ;
Each offers up his incense at her shrine,
And then, departing, swears she is divine,
While, skill'd to lure, she plays the syren's part,
And through the ear finds entrance to the heart.

Now, with the voice of song and harmony,
Comes the young Spring, light-bounding o'er the lea.
Joy, and the Sisters three, and roguish Mirth
Trace her soft steps upon the teeming earth;
Woke by her kiss, leap forth the bright-eyed flowers
And laugh to look upon the happy hours;
Pleas'd, at her beck, the feather'd people rise,
Plume their gay wings and murmur to the skies;
Green grow the vales; upon the gray wood steals
More varying hues than ever morn reveals;
Till the full buds, slow bursting into day,
Shine forth and fling their winter vests away.
All voices wild, so rude and harsh of late,
Are tun'd and soften'd to earth's tranquil state;
Echoes have hush'd their ravings and the wind
Hath all its noisy blustering rage resign'd;
While the strong stream is sunken to a rill
That with a music trickles from the hill.
Gay butterflies athwart the greensward glance,
And insect myriads in the sunbeams dance,

While the bees pilfer as they pass along,
And ply their labours with a cheerful song.

Oh ! can it be that now, while thus divine,
Clothed in Spring's holy mantle, all things shine,—
When the green grass invites the willing feet,—
When the gay birds the gladsome wanderer greet,—
When, from her sleep awaking with a sigh,
Nature shakes off stern Winter's tyranny,
And in her green domains is heard a voice
Bidding the soul to wonder and rejoice,—
Oh ! can it be that in the world are they
Who from her glories rather turn away,
Fly from her pure delights and virtuous charms
To lavish health in art's polluted arms ?

Yes ; from their homes, embosom'd in earth's pride,
Green smiling, fields and pleasant groves beside,
When first the lengthening hours of light declare
The teeming promise of the youthful year,

A heartless crew at Fashion's bidding fly
Where London lifts her dusky canopy.
Untrue to heaven, to earth's best beauties blind,
Dead to the noblest pleasures of the mind,
Who live on earth and know it not—who bend
The brow and frown upon a faithful friend !
Think ye, was this great pomp of nature given
To meet alone th' all-seeing eye of Heaven ?
Or that these many glorious things were made
All unadored to flourish and to fade ?
Nay—nay;—to perfect and exalt the whole,
'There needs the holy influence of soul.

But now, alas ! for folly, the full tide
Of beauty, wealth, nobility and pride,
Rolls toward the town, and, gathering greatness
there,
Floods with its waves the row, the park, the square.
Sudden the solitary streets resound
With the hoarse wheels swift gliding o'er the ground ;

The long-deserted places smile once more,
And look—just as they look'd twelve months before.
Scar'd by the broom, the baffled spider tries
To wage vain battle with his enemies ;
The lean and famish'd visitors of night
Hear and bestir themselves with grim delight,—
The starveling mouse in fancy feasts again,—
The bat is banish'd from his dark domain,—
The brazen signal shines upon the door,
And speaks as loud and often as before,—
The jingling bells in various chime begin
To rouse the echoes of the house within,—
Voices awake where silence long hath been,—
Where all was desert many forms are seen,—
Life reigns in all her gayest colours dress'd,—
And love—but fancy shall portray the rest.

Now every man and every thing revives,
The green-room opens and the gambler thrives ;
Thieves feel new life flow round their fingers' ends,
And fashionables cut their country friends ;

The drowsy watchman, with most piteous groans,
His empire's threaten'd overthrow bemoans ;
Charles Wright sighs thrice less frequently per day,
Although he gives his gooseberry wine away ;
The pretty pastry-cook unconscious arms
Herself with all the weapons of her charms ;
And cautious Crockford, calculating well,
Reigns the arch demon of his earthly hell ;
Hope smiling comes and waves her torch again
O'er pining poets, whispering not in vain ;
Booksellers now to third editions bend,
“ Happy to see their much-respected friend ;”
And nurse-maid nov'lists with huge pleasure hail
The finis of some fashionable tale.
Groans the Minerva with some new romance
In five thick vols.—the scene, a cave in France ;
From Albemarle and New Burlington appear
The literary promise of the year—
Those buds of fancy's garden, that await
The genial summer in this embryo state.

The anxious editor, with lighter heart
And weightier pockets, plays his potent part,
While glad reporters rouse the slumb'ring pen,
And penny-a-line-men wake to life again !
Ravenous reviewers mark the printed pile,
And carping critics stir their treasur'd bile ;
The press—the great press—labours with its load,
The devils pant, while lynx-eyed foremen goad,
And the compositor, with dire dismay,
Eyes the MS. he must set up to-day.
With dexterous caper, opera-dancers strive
Wily to keep the flagging flame alive ;
The little link-boys lift the sooty light,
Showing their thin wan faces to the night ;
Blind Will the beggar deems it fitting now
To wear ten thousand sorrows on his brow ;
The sturdy drayman, with more haughty tread,
Carries his master's honours on his head ;
The pompous postman thunders at the door
With thrice as much importance as before.

Now busy milliners from far and near
Twirl the thin twine and ply the pointed spear,—
Bond Street is gay again, and countless beaux
Display the tailor's science in dumb show ;
And clean cravats, too num'rous for my song,
Take their gay ties from thee, divine Le Blanc !

Immortal man ! whose genius so sublime
Will dare the contest with devouring Time,
Le Blanc ! rejoice ;—posterity will look
With pride and reverence on thy wondrous book ;
Gods ! what are Newton, Davy, Locke, to thee,
Thou great expounder of a mystery ?
True, there have been whose theme was heaven, and
some
Have proudly painted things that are to come.
One hath portray'd the " Art of Love," and one,
Less vain, the " Art of Brewing" hath begun.
Horace, of whom, it may be, thou hast heard,
To trace the " Art of Poesy" preferr'd ;

And nameless rascals, playing knavish parts,
Have written volumes on the magic arts.
Some have explored new paths to that high place
Where Science shows her ever-glorious face ;
And some, with pure philanthropy imbued,
Have spent their labours for the common good ;—
But thou—what laud sufficient may be given—
“The Art of Tying the Cravat,”* oh, heaven !
How mighty must that mind be on which first
The dazzling light of this new knowledge burst !
How vast must that imagination be,—
How grand, to fathom such a mystery !

Tell me, thou master spirit of the age,
If, when thou close thy mortal pilgrimage,
The anxious crowds should gaping round thee stand
To mark thy transit to the unknown land,
Oh ! say thee, how wilt thou adjust the tie
That ushers thee to immortality ?

* The Art of Tying the Cravat, by H. Le Blanc. London, 1829.

The day draws nigh on which Britannia calls
Her chosen rulers to those sacred walls,
That have so often echoed to the shout
Of freemen echoing the great cry without.
How, straying through that venerable place,
May backward thought with patriot memory trace
The spot where liberty hath rais'd her hand,
And waved her snow-white banners o'er the land ;
Where virtue hath endured the siege of those
Who, for that she was virtue, were her foes.
Here was the tyrant foil'd, and Britons here
Shook off the burden he would have them bear ;
Here hath proud might bow'd down to right, and,
lo !
Here did the people triumph o'er their foe.

The day draws nigh : whispers are heard about,
And some are confident, and others doubt ;
Some smile significantly, and some nod
With all the dumb importance of a god ;

While not a few would have the world imply
That they are bound by oaths of secrecy,—
The confidants of ministers, and so
(Simpering contemptuously) they needs must know.
Another is acquainted with Lord T——
And can assure his friends the thing will be,
While one, who boasts the favours of Earl Y——,
Is confident the story is a lie.
Now in the club-rooms gravely they debate
Of tricks, and toils, and policies of state,
And the green-grocer president in vain
Strives the mysterious movement to explain :—
But yet he sees what course the king will take,
And what a monstrous speech will Brougham make.
All ranks, all ages, join the general hum,
And some are sure, some wonder what will come :
There is a stir of hearts, and everywhere
A mingled murmur beats the listening ear.
So when the storm, far distant yet and dim,
Lifts o'er the hill-top grey its banners grim,—

When every leaf and grass-blade is at rest,
And winds are sleeping on the mountain's breast,—
When not a pulse is stirring in the air,
As if all Heaven had held its breath to hear,—
A low uncertain sound comes rolling on,
Like far-off thunder heard at night, or moan
Of many waters ; and upon the sea
The crested waves leap up tumultuously,
Wanting the master-wind, and with their roar
Speak of the storm, and wake the rock-girt shore.

The anxious hour arrives at length and brings
A thousand hopes and fears upon its wings.
The speech is spoken, and the rabble rout
Proclaim the tidings to the world without ;
Unhappy Ireland hears the joyous cry
And sends up shouts that shake the vaulted sky ;
Liberty ! liberty ! swings from hill to hill,—
From vale to vale the sound advances still.
A new domain from Bigotry's dark sway
Hath now victorious Knowledge pluck'd away ;

One hideous stain hath our thrice happy age
Swept from humanity's much checker'd page.
Religion hears rejoicing, for that now
The veil that man had hung upon her brow
Should be flung off, and all her charms shine forth
In the pure lustre of their native worth.
Glad is the goddess that her holy name
Shall cloak no longer cruelty and shame,—
That she, whose ways are peace and love, shall be
No more another name for enmity,—
And that men, seeking by a different road
The same great Spirit and the same abode,
Henceforth shall lay the jealous steel aside,
And climb life's steep, like brothers, side by side ;
Nor, because one prefers a flow'ry rest,
And his next neighbour loves the bare rock best,
To tug, and toil, and, fiend-like, strive to thrust
From his uncertain hold his brother dust.
For there is room enough for both to bend
Their tedious travel to the same high end ;

And GOD hath love sufficient for us all,
From what strange straits soever we may call.

It is, indeed, a glorious thing to be
By fame enroll'd the founder of the free ;
Whatever adverse fortunes life may give,
Death is more kind to him—he dies to live.
Grief strews his clay-cold couch—his grave-stone
bears

That best of epitaphs, a nation's tears,—
And, in the story of all time, his name
Is writ in fadeless characters of flame,—
A brilliant spot upon the dark red page
That bears the awful record of the age.
Thither will smiling history often turn
To read the tale that glows, the words that burn,
And, with all homage pointing to the spot,
To her mute listeners celebrate his lot ;
Till in their hearts are kindled kindred fires,
And nations learn to emulate their sires.

Statesman and warrior ! who, with equal art,
Canst play the soldier's and the courtier's part,—
Rock of thy country ! skill'd alike to wield
The sword, the pen, the cabinet, the field,—
Oh, who may count the laurels on thy brow,
To which a brighter wreath is added now ?

Such, WELLINGTON, will be thy glorious lot
When they who hate thy greatness are forgot !
Ever it was the fate of excellence,
To haughty jealousy to give offence ;
And 'tis the way o' the world that men are prone
To dispraise what they cannot make their own.
The envious clouds conceal the crown of snow
That shines upon the loftiest mountain's brow ;
But yet it first reflects the morning fair,
And the last blush of evening lingers there.
Flies buzz about the giant oak, but we
Do not the less admire its majesty ;
And, though the countless insect host surprise,
Still we remember that they are but flies.—

Party is an ill glass through which to scan
Those shades of character that make the man;
For, as he will, the wily knave can prove
The passing object worthy of all love;
Or, if he please, the veriest fiend that e'er
In human guise dealt round destruction here.
But these are for a moment, and then they
Mix with their kindred dust and pass away;
Their very names, so eloquent of yore,
Now banish'd utterly, are heard no more :
While he, the master-spirit, over whom
In vain hath roll'd the shadow of the tomb,
Smiles at the impotent assaults of years,
And on his brow increasing splendour wears.
Rob'd in Time's vest, his mighty shade goes forth
To visit all the nations of the earth,
Stirring men's hearts to dare such noble things
As virtue teaches and the poet sings,—
Infusing thoughts of high import and bright,
Scattering abroad a brilliant beacon-light.

Like some enormous hill, that all night long
Hath been encompass'd with an envious throng
Of frowning vapours, which the impure earth
From her foul jaws hath through the day sent forth.
Round its huge brow they circle and assail
Its ponderous shoulders with incessant hail ;
But, when the morning time is nigh, and far
And faint in heaven reclines her herald star,
The veil is rent, the clouds dissolve, the rays
Of the low sun upon the proud heights blaze,
And, intertwining there, at once unfold
The mingled tints of purple, gray, and gold.
It shines as if it were itself a sun,
Ere the all-holy light hath yet begun
To glimmer through the lowland glooms; and so
Day governs there, while night rules stern below.
The early wayfarer beholds the gleam
With fickle splendour through the distance seen,
And deems it some strange star that decks the brow
Of twilight, peeping o'er the hill-tops now.

It was a glorious deed to rend away
The veil impos'd by Bigotry's dark sway.
Oh, better than the warrior's blood-stain'd car,
That bloodless triumph in the mental war!
It was a glorious deed, and nobly done,—
But, while she wreathes the laurels thou hast won
About thy brow, with honour crown'd and years,
Britannia bathes the garland with her tears;
She weeps her people's slighted voice, that went
Sweeping and echoing through the firmament;
And, though awaken'd by the fiendish art
Of those who swear to act the Christian's part,
Not wholly to be spurn'd by those who stand
As echoes of the voices of the land.
But more—much more, alas! than these—than all—
She weeps her proudest hope's unhappy fall;—
The faithlessness of those whom she had deem'd
The good, the faithful, everything they seem'd.
Ignoble crew!—The patriot muse recoils
From names that sicken, and from touch that soils.

Prowlers for power and place, base herd, who bow
To aught that bears a promise on its brow ;—
Dastards ! did ye forget how ye should be
A monstrous stain on England's history ?
What ? is the flame, the patriot flame, expir'd
That once the soul of every Briton fir'd ?
Unbless'd we are if we may not rely
Even upon our own fidelity !

But there is one redeeming splendour found,
One star bright beaming through the storm-clouds
round,—

ELDON, thou good old man ! whose wither'd brow
Is wan with years, and silv'ry with Time's snow.
Thou, hoary patriot, with word and deed,
Didst rise in what thou thought'st our hour of need,
And, Briton-like, oppos'd thy aged form
To stem the brunt and fury of the storm.
Planting upon the grave thy foot, that bears
The venerable weight of fourscore years,

Thou did'st arise to dare the dreadful fight,
And prove the strength of conscientious might.
Well then thy country may erect to thee
A column-stone to wear the memory
Of thy proud spirit, that her sons may turn
From Eldon's monument to where some urn
Shrines the unwept remains of one of those
Who swell'd the flood they trembled to oppose.
And mark how much more glorious 'tis to hold
Their country's reverence than her place and gold.

So, in Arabian sands the traveller's eye
A circle vast of ruins may descry ;
Columns, and prostrate palaces, and walls
To their foundations razed, and princely halls,
And gorgeous theatres, low lying there,
Huge domes and cupolas decaying near ;
Altars abject, and temples overthrown,
And huge, majestic, desolate, alone,

One lordly tower, that time hath smote in vain,
Still standing, monarch of the pathless plain ;
Though round about it cank'ring ivy creeps,
And on its walls the poisonous night-dew weeps,—
Though years have cloth'd it in a cloak of gray,
And storms have sapp'd its giant strength away,
Still it uplifts its venerable head,
A proud memorial of the perish'd dead,
And seems to utter to the hearts of all
“Ye war in vain,—this city *shall not* fall !”

The wine produced—“I prithee, Tom, relate
Some of thy sketches of the men of state ;
For, though thine arm, thanks to its friendly care,
Hath gain'd an entrance for me everywhere,
Still through the long debate last night in vain
I sought a knowledge of the speaker's name.
Especially I noted one whose brow
Betray'd the boundless thoughts that lurk'd below ;
And in the frequent flashes of whose eye
Methought I could a fire of soul descry——

**“ You have not err’d. BROUGHAM is one of those
Who have much more of mind than they disclose ;
Like that false fruit of rough and uncouth rind
Without, within excelling sweet we find.
Truly in that ungracious casket lies
A precious jewel of surpassing price ;
And, if strange motions on his face are wrought,
It is because his very life is thought.
Believe me, Ned, the world will seek in vain
Long e’er ’twill “ look upon his like again.”
Orator, legislator, lawyer, he
Combines wit, science, and philosophy.
Endow’d with much by Nature, Art hath done
Yet more and perfected the work begun.
His mind was a fair garden, whose rich soil
For common uses needed little toil ;
But the unwearied master labour’d hard
To store it well—and great was his reward.
With so much taste its many flowers combine,
That though, if need be, each will singly shine,**

Yet with such harmony the whole is wreath'd,
We know not whence the choicest bloom is breath'd,
A generous enthusiast, his mind
Can deign to embrace no less than all mankind,
And not unfrequently he dares devise
Schemes that would ask the care of centuries.
He grasps too much ;—the man who stone by stone
A tower dismantles, even though alone
Will with more speed lay waste its turrets high,
Level its proud head nodding to the sky,
Than he, however strong, who would o'erthrow
The same by thrusting with his back below.
His soul is too capacious for the age,
And fondly fancies every man a sage.
Girded for battle, through the world he goes,
Seeking to sweep away our mortal foes.
He dares whole armies to the field, and boasts
How he hath combated enormous hosts,
While meantime rogues, with admirable grace,
Commit a thousand crimes before his face.

It is his frailty,—and pray who has none?—
To measure other intellects by his own;
And, because he can leap the wall of time,
And stand upon its eminence sublime,
That we can do the like he fondly deems,
And of a real Utopian era dreams.
To these, add all the titles that belong
To him who stoops not to the lightest wrong,
Who fixes his firm eye on some bright spot,
Whither he bends through every varying lot;
Though gold may tempt, or power and place allure,
For ever constant and for ever pure.”

“ What think you, Tom, of DAWSON ?”

“ I know not.”

“ Of HUME ?”

“ As one above the common lot.

Envy and enmity, indeed, have tried
The verdict of the heart to set aside,
But he hath issued from the hateful strife
With threefold honours on his useful life.
Survey the senate closely ;—you will find
Its sons much like the rest of human kind ;
There are some flies whose buzz, buzz, buzz, can tease,
And, though it harm not, banish rest and ease.”

“ Ay, man, but ’tis the hum and buzz that make
The persons buzz’d about to watch and wake :
It is not labour lost, if, fearing this,
The rulers pause before they do amiss.
’Tis a small goad the sturdy ox that sways,
And the strong steed a little steel obeys.
What of LORD RUSSELL?”

“ You have named a name
That is inscribed upon the rolls of fame,
To live and sparkle in the illustrious line,
Engross’d in characters of flame divine.

Well, well indeed for Britain would it be,
If her young nobles all were such as he :
Then might our island hope to hail once more
The steps of banish'd virtue to her shore—
Then to his caves would foul Corruption fly
With Luxury and Immorality :
Patriot !"—

“ Enough ;—the cold dull pomp of speech
The height of his deservings cannot reach.
Pray, how esteem you PEEL ?”

“ Survey mankind

With cautious scrutiny, and you will find
That some are fortune's favourites, others born
To bear her utter fickleness and scorn.
Some minds are less than passing strangers deem,
Others again are greater than they seem.
From hasty glancing at the river's flow,
If gold be mingled with the sands below,

Or if it be one impure mass of mud,
Oh ! who may say, first gazing on the flood !
And Peel is one whose character to read
Aright no little thoughtfulness will need ;
For, with such ready and consummate art,
He veils the secret workings of his heart,
They who would search must sift and sift again,
Or all their labour will be spent in vain.
He is the child of fortune, and her breath
Hath blown him into greatness ;—for the wreath
That binds his brow is sever'd from her crown,—
Her powerful hand hath rais'd him, not his own.
It was his chance to perfect those great things
And verify those proud imaginings,
Which other intellects, than his more high,
Had first conceiv'd and cloth'd with harmony.
On these a careful cautious hand he laid,
And what before was shadow substance made.
Peel's acts, Peel's words, are pil'd upon the page
That bears the living record of the age :

Peel's acts, Peel's words, indeed—not Peel's the plan
Of thus far mending the estate of man.

“ But do not, Ned, mistake me ;—though small fame
Be due as the designer to his name,
Still it is no light honour to have been
The first to call to light the shadowy scene,
By others summon'd, and, with master hand,
Substantial make an unsubstantial land.
Like as when sportively an artist tries
His pencil, painting ocean, earth, and skies,
In that delusive liquid that conceals
While cold, the colours genial warmth reveals.
If chance a stranger find the unsoil'd page,
And thoughtless show it to the sun-ray's rage,
All the invisible proportions wake,
Leap into life, and living lustre take.
Amaz'd he views the picture he hath made,
Here flush'd with light—here deepening into shade,
And half believes it was some art of his
That had created such a scene as this.”

“ It is well said, Tom, and your simile,
Though wanting rule, doth well enough agree.
How estimate you WETHERALL?”

“ As one
Who seeks with waxen wings to scale the sun,
And who, if he would be content with earth,
May be admir'd for probity and worth ;
But striving to outsoar his kindred clay,
He falls and is a jest.”

“ What of EARL GREY ?
And REDESDALE?”

“ Both spirits of the age,—
The last a lawyer, and the first a sage.
Each in his station great, but greatest he
Who stands aloof, and never bows the knee
To power and place, like”——

“ Hold—enough;—but few
Can waste their words on similes like you.

Of SADLER what ?”

“ As of a star that high
Amid the bright assemblage of the sky,
Shines, not the brightest, but enough to prove,
A hope, a guide, and claim the traveller’s love.”

“ LORD BEXLEY”——

“ Fum.”

“ Or HUSKISSON.”

“ A man

Who hopes to do much more than mortal can.
For his capacious soul no bounds may bind,
And never-wearying toils his master mind.
’Tis not unfrequent for the world to bend
The brow and frown upon a faithful friend.

In sooth, it is not seldom found that they
Who aught by age endear'd would sweep away,
Though by that utter banishment alone
The world can keep the station it hath won,
With cursings and revilings are repaid,—
The vain man's wonder and the fool's jest made.
Such was his fate;—though, with enlighten'd eye
That compass'd all the earth, he could descry
The rights and interests of nations, still
Upon his head foes heap'd a load of ill,
That after-time will smile to overthrow,
And, where was hung the coronet of woe,
Wreath the green laurel and a chaplet twine
About his brow of fadeless flowers divine.”

“ By the bye, what was your opinion, pray,
Of the important question of the day ? ”

“ Well know you, Ned, that long, long it hath been
My hope this glorious triumph to have seen ;

But now I hail it in another light—
As the first skirmish in the fearful fight
That right with might, and knowledge with the power
Of bigotry are waging. That great hour
Which gave the death-blow to the pride of those
Who are their own and Britain's direst foes ;
Show'd the first step to that improvement vast,
That surely must and will be made at last.
Knowledge, his royal sceptre in his hand,
Is marching stately over all the land.
Men see and know the radiant child of heaven,
To light life's path by pitying Mercy given ;
Swift steals the sacred flame from soul to soul,
And through the thoughts unusual visions roll ;
The veil that hung round mind's most secret shrine
Evanishes before his light divine,
As the thick, damp, and murky mists of night
Disperse and fly before the morning light.
Now hath the reign of intellect begun ;—
Above the horison peeps that peerless sun

That long shall travel ere it will attain
Meridian splendour 'mid the blue domain ;
Whose setting shall be very slow, if yet
Again on this world it be doom'd to set.
Both church and state corruption hath crept in ;—
Though fair without, there is a worm within.
The time is come to emancipate the mind
From those false fetters that too firmly bind ;
To learn to reverence things, not names,—esteem
All beings as they are, not as they seem :
To reason for ourselves, and not to take
Untried the doctrines for the teacher's sake ;
To hurl indecent prejudice away,
Till the pure soul is ripe for reason's sway,
Free as the wind, and cloudless as the day.

“Once has our church reform'd, and yet once
more

A change must be, as great as that of yore.
Slowly, but surely, and with caution much
She must endure the lancet's healing touch ;

The genial draught, though bitter, quaff she must,
That her whole frame resolve not into dust,
And so, from her corruptions purg'd, shall she
Go down all glorious to posterity.
Much may she yield, and much will yet remain,—
God's service should not be a place of gain ;
Priests, to be such as gospel preachers ought,
Should neither be the buyers nor the bought,
And they to whom such sacred cares are given
Should not be ministers of earth, but heaven.

“ Thus for the church ; nor less the state demands
The slow correction of judicious hands.
The people's great prerogative should be
Diffused and offer'd to all equally ;
The law—our law—must be the poor man's friend,
An easy pathway to a gracious end :
But the proud tyrant it hath been whose sway
Hath bow'd the rich, and swept the poor away ;—
And equity”——

“ Excuse me, Tom, I own
When sometimes in my chamber sitting lone
With law-books circled, I have wonder’d why
We should distinguish law from equity.
Is it that this distributing implies
That one is not the other?”

“ Ay,” he sighs :
“ They but agree in this, that both contrive
How best to steal the honey from the hive.
Hark ! ’tis the clock—I must away to meet
A certain friend of ours in Regent Street.”

“ And I’m for Drury with day’s parting light ;
Thanks for thy care—good night t’ye, Tom.”

“ Good night.”

Oh, I could weep whilst musing on the stage,—
At once the shame and wonder of our age.

Why hath the Tragic Muse flown from the shore
That was her own most favour'd haunt of yore ?
Whither, insulted shade of Shakspeare, say,
Hath our dramatic greatness pass'd away ?
Why have we pluck'd the laurel from thy brow,
Spurn'd at thy bust, and laid thy statue low ?
Why doth thy living verse no longer come,
Speaking in every house and every home ?
Why hear we not thy voice divine and why
Are we not cheer'd with thy philosophy ?
Where are those scintillations of the mind
Produced by oft collision with mankind ?
Why droops the Drama like an old gray oak
Whose leaves are wither'd by a thunder-stroke,
Until, while gazing on its hoary head,
We know not if it be asleep or dead ?
But let us hope, when spring returns again,
It will unfold fresh honours on the plain,
Wave its vast arms in youthful beauty dress'd,
And wear new vigour in its verdant vest.

So shall the eye be glad, and willing feet
Will haste their old and valued friend to greet,—
The long-deserted circle will resound,
With laugh and song incessantly sent round;
And Mirth will fling her mantle o'er the scene
Where late hath Sadness reign'd unrivall'd queen.

But hail to thee ! who, like the bird of Spring,
A flash from Hope's bright torch-flame back dost
bring !

Thou, child of promise, thou alone canst raise
The sleeping honours of thine art's young days ;
'Tis thine—'tis thine, fair being, to restore
The banish'd Muse to Britain's island shore !
Beauty like thine could of itself allure
The listless steps to Drury's once-throng'd door ;
But those perfections which alone would claim,
For any other, an immortal fame,
Rivall'd, o'ershadow'd, and eclips'd, we find,
By the surpassing beauty of thy mind.—

**Kemble !—The very name awakes a thrill
In those who wear *his* deathless memory still !—
Kemble !—it is the watchword of the stage,—
The speaking shame of our inglorious age.—
Kemble !—how many deep reflections roll
At that proud signal through the sorrowing soul :
Rise, then, thou daughter of a noble race !
And, to thine own pure loveliness and grace
Add all the excellencies rare combined
That are the birthright of a Kemble's mind ;
So will it be thy happy lot to dry
The tear that twinkles in the Muse's eye,
And with thy most melodious voice recall
The shade of Shakspeare to the hearts of all.**

**As when ungentle night upon the world
His wings twice steep'd in blackness hath unfurl'd ;—
When travellers ask in vain for one small ray
To light their footsteps on the doubtful way ;
After awhile, through mist, and cloud, and storm,
Resplendent Venus shows her decent form,**

Shakes off the clouds and struggles through the
gloom,

While the gray mists fantastic shapes assume,

And then, unwillingly retiring, fly

From the surpassing lustre of her eye.

Waked by her smiles, the other stars come forth,

And with their lamps light up the laughing earth ;

Then are the travellers glad, and many a time

They bless the sentinels of heaven sublime,

And with full heart and bounding footfall come

Where love, with list'ning ear, waits anxiously at
home.

How utterly corrupted is that stage,

Once the delight and wonder of the age !

In vain Young's energy and Kemble's art,

Kean's matchless picture of the villain's part ;

Macready's classic purity and grace ;—

The strange delusion these cannot efface.

We seek the theatre to trick the eye

With gorgeous spectacle and pageantry,

Not to inspire the soul with high designs,
With thought that fires and feeling that refines,
Oh ! what so terrible a change hath made ?—
Our old affections—wherefore do they fade ?

First, the dishonour of this fate is due,
Followers of Fashion's fickleness, to you.
Next lights the curse upon the heads of those,
Religion's public friends, but private foes,
Who, like the Pharisees of old, proclaim
Their own perfections with the trump of fame :
They haunt the streets, where thousands throng the
way,
To show their goodness to the eye of day ;
A partial, narrow path to Heaven they teach,
And dire damnation to all others preach.
Prompt to revile the world, as if it were
A hell, and man the demon dwelling there,
While they alone, such scanty love is given,
May claim a passport to the realms of Heaven.

These self-assuming holy ones we meet
 In every city,—nay, in every street ;
 They foul our villages—infect our homes—
 Stink in our houses—and where gladness comes
 Shed drop by drop the poison of despair,
 To blight the bliss that yet may linger there.
 What hath so chok'd those tombs of human pride,
 The asylums that are found on every side ?
 Impious ! God sent religion here to glad
 The heart of man, and not to make him mad.*

Of all the forms the fiend assumes, the worst,
 The foulest, fearfulest, and most accurs'd,
 Is the smooth hypocrite ;—the very name
 Calls to my cheek the burning blush of shame ;
 For in all other shapes a cautious eye
 The lurking devil sometimes may espy ;
 But, when hell wears the mask of heaven, oh ! who
 Dare deem the pure celestial sign untrue ?

* See Burrows on Insanity.

With this forged passport through the world he glides,
His victims first deceives and then derides,
Because their human frailty could not read
The heart of one who seem'd a saint indeed.

Look upon earth, how bright it is—how fair—
What holy rapture stirs the Summer air ;—
What fragrance fills the palace of the Spring—
What hues of beauty clothe the warbler's wing ;—
What sacred calm is in the hush of night,
What glory in the sun's awakening light ;
How all is fashion'd by the hand of God
To fit this rolling ball for man's abode ;
Then say if ye can deem our lot to be
A pilgrimage of utter misery—
A path bestrewn with weariness and woe,
And that no pleasures wait on us below.

Lo ! where Clarinda, weary of this world
And man's ingratitude, hath wide unfurl'd

Faith's blazing banner, and her self-love soothes
With types, and texts, and scraps of sacred truths.
With huge quotations arm'd, she dares the fight,
And, in subverting Scripture, spends the night.
If common sense and reason we would try,
Without a pause she doth their claims deny,
And, closing thus the windows of the soul,
Admits no light but through one cobwebb'd hole.
Her path by scatter'd sermons one may find,
For, like the snail, she leaves her slime behind;
And these with preaching, quibbling, type, and text,
The missions one day, and the slaves the next,
Complete the portraiture of those who fain
By words, not deeds, Heaven's favour would obtain.

Not such is the true Christian, for with him
Life's cup is fill'd with kindness to the brim.
He serves his God in secret and in shade,
With prayers the heart, and not the lip hath made.
His soul, benevolent and just, boasts not
That it is sever'd from the common lot,

But, with an eye where love and hope abound,
On all earth's many people looks around.
Compassionate himself, he never deems
A God of mercy other than he seems
In those magnificent works that every where
Proclaim his bounty and paternal care.
He looks on life as on a mighty plain
That man must traverse ere his rest he gain;
Diversified with hill and dale and flood,
Fresh blowing flowers and intertwining wood,
Bare rugged rocks, small streamlets lisping low,
And the broad river's calm majestic flow.
Through these wind paths, some rude, unhewn and
rough,
And some of mossy softness, green enough;
Some bleak and bare, some blithsome, warm, and
gay,
Some clad in frowns, some laughing Time away;
But, though such various form to each be given,
All tend alike, and all conduct to Heaven;

But then we must observe the path assign'd,
Nor into snares set round us wander blind ;
So shall we meet in one bright home at last,
Our travel ended and our dangers past.

Now certain presses make uncertain moans,
And newspapers re-echo with the groans
Of publishers in labour ;—critics cry,
And circulating-library keepers sigh ;
Reviews an added consequence assume,
And with more pomp pronounce the dreaded doom ;
While, with much trembling, anxious authors wait
The awful dictum that decides their fate.

I see them all.—All !—nay, that cannot be ;—
Eye may not count the crowded company.
Of every rank in long array they stand,
With myriads burdening the groaning land.
From prince to peasant, every hand would wield
The pen and fling its gauntlet on the field ;

The untutor'd hind fears not to dare the fight
With the collegian in his classic might ;
And learned lords and wearers of a star
With rude mechanics tempt the wordy war ;
The soldier lays the victor sword aside,
By whose good help he hath our foes defied,
With a sharp pen sheds—ink, not blood, and
weaves

His gory laurels with the bard's bay-leaves ;
The sailor, ship in port and nerves unstrung,
Recalls the deeds with which the world hath rung,
And, clothing truth in fiction's gaudy vest,
Steps upon shore a novelist confess'd ;
The lawyer is no lawyer till the press
Hath given two vols. of learned worthlessness,
And the divine is not divine until
A blue conclave award his rhyming skill ;
Poets spring up in every street and lane,
Addling their sentimental brains in vain.
It is the age of scribble, and if we
Could count its value by its quantity,

We should indeed be learned, wise, and great,
In arts, in laws, in literature, in state ;
But so it is, what we have gain'd in length
And polish'd diction we have lost in strength ;
Truly enough, the present time hath taught
That Genius neither can be made nor bought,
But that it is a rare and precious thing,
Which, in all climes and ages, will upspring,
Float, like a meteor, before mortal eyes,
Taking its travel through the lofty skies,
Whom neither storms can chill nor suns call forth,
But, when it please, will show its face on earth.

The trashy pile, the printed mass survey,
The spawn of impure brains, that day by day
With senseless drivel deluges the press,
And burdens shelf and desk with nothingness ;
Then say if aught among it you can find
Bearing the never-fading stamp of mind
So manifestly speaking in the page
That breathes the spirit of a happier age.

We want the pure gem, even though it were
Encrusted with the base earth cleaving there ;
For now, though glittering and gay, alas !
Our jewels are but mimic shapes of glass.

Such is our state ; but would you ask me whence
We have so much of sound and little sense ?
It is because our scribes of late have sought
To cull the word while they neglect the thought ;
So much is language perfected, that he
Who gleans the common cant of poetry
Can weave a tale of most melodious tone,
That hath not one bright image of its own,
And sickly school-boys, in the twang of rhyme,
Some score of smoothest nonsense verses chime.

Hence is it that, as every one hath found
In city, town—for they like flies abound—
Some sickly pale-faced youth who fain would try
To torture language into harmony.

Take one, for instance—Felix Froth, a fool
Who might perchance have waded well through
school.

He then reads Byron, Campbell, Pope, and Moore,
And feels a joy he never felt before ;
Perhaps an elder brother scribbles too,—
If so, the die is cast with less ado ;
He spells the first-named poets o'er and o'er
And, as he reads, his breast inflates the more
He takes long solitary walks, and sighs,
Gapes at the moon, and goes to ruralize,
Till, as he deems, having drunk in enough
Of silliness and sentimental stuff,
He goads his empty and conceited brain
For rhyme, not reason, till it aches again :
After long toiling, to his joy, appears
A string of verses upon "Smiles," or "Tears,
"The Light Canoe"—the "Autumn," or the "Spring,
"Morning," or "Night," or some such worn-out thing.
Mamma applauds—esteems them perfect quite,
And elder brother reads them with delight ;

The jingling folly by Mamma is shown
To every ignoramus in the town,
And "Felix"—"Felix" she asserts to be
A bard of no mean notoriety.
By dint of teasing on his brother's part,
And a few hints with his Mamma's best art,
An album now and then appears to claim
The honour of the ass's rhymes and name.
He binds a splendid book in calf and gold,
Whose hot-pressed leaves in long array unfold
Manuscript drivell writ with cautious care
To clothe its nothingness in mantle fair.
The portly volume shows in letters large
The precious nonsense that it hath in charge,
And on the parlour shelf, that all might see,
It bears the pompous title, "POETRY."
Thus are begot those nauseous puffing things,
Who, trusting to the strength of other wings,
In their surpassing vanity would fain
Besiege the seats they seek to climb in vain.

Lo ! where, like locusts, swarm the letter'd race,
Fear in each heart, but hope on every face.
Lords, ladies, knights and baronets appear,
And briefless barristers their quartos bear :
Nursemaids and liveried valets linger nigh,
And foppish footmen roll the northward eye.
Schoolboys come forth, and milliners are seen,
Amid the multitude with mincing mien ;
Clod-hoppers who have crack'd some twenty score
Of slip-slop verses, join the dreadful roar,
And love-sick girls and sentimental youths
Carry their second-hand poetic truths.
Here foams and frets a little lord, whose lays
The world will read not, though reviewers praise ;
Here in seraphic mood my lady stands,
Bearing a brace of novels in her hands ;
And not far off, her maid presents a third,
Which, as a tale of fashion, is preferred.
There may we see a pompous pedant fling
His blunted javelin at the bard's bright wing ;

Here cat-like critics, prowling for their prey,
And hir'd reviewers jobbing by the day.
There one of rueful countenance and gait
Six senseless sermons lifts in solemn state;—
Romancers revel in their endless page,
And rakes rejoice that they conduct *the Age*;
While pining puppies whine their puling song,
And, self-applauding, primly pass along,
Right-reverend scribblers right divinely look,
And titles give a title to a book;
M. P.s and shepherds vend their worthless scrawl,
And one great *graphomania* urges all.

But some from the huge multitude stand forth,
The mighty master spirits of the earth,—
The suns from whom inferior planets take
The little light their dusky torches make,
I see the coronet of genius—lo!
Her radiant eye and decent mien I know,
And, in her many-colour'd robes array'd,
No name can perish and no fame can fade.

First of the favour'd few, the man behold
Whose touch can turn all metals into gold.
The great enchanter, at whose bidding rise
All the pass'd forms of perish'd centuries.
See, where he sits in some sequester'd room,
Whose light is soften'd to sacred gloom,
Enough to wake the magic hand of thought,
And show the frail phantasmas it hath wrought;
But not enough to prove how false as fair
Are the thin visions that it summons there.
Around him relics of the olden time
With the wild chord of his reflections chime,
And ancient folios, big with learned lore,
Unlock the treasures of their classic store.
Retiring here, the great magician tries
His mystic arts and potent witcheries;
He wills the word, and, at the bidding, come
The disembodied tenants of the tomb:
He nods—and suddenly at his command
Imagination waves her wizard wand,—

An unreal pageant passes through the place,
Wearing the lineaments of life and grace;—
The crumbling castle and the lordly tower,
Baronial mansions in their pride and power;
The living landscape robed in spring's fresh green,
The highland heather and the mountain-scene,—
Rude rocky dells and valleys breathing balm,
The hoarse-voic'd tempest and the evening calm;
The quiet stream, the torrent wild, appear
Cloth'd in the vestments they were wont to wear.
Nor are all these by life uncheer'd, for bright
He can illumine them with forms of light,
Or, if his mood be so, enveil the whole
With the dark dreadful phantoms of the soul.
The sage, the wit, at his command come forth,
The smiling villain and the man of worth;—
Young delicate beings unto whom is given
A nature pure and high that breathes of heaven :
Warriors arise, and heroes live again ;
Monarchs once more in all their glory reign,

And, as they were in life, the shadows come
In long procession from the tyrant tomb.
Then, having play'd their parts, they pass away,
Melt into light, and mingle with the day ;
And the old chamber-walls alone are seen
Where late the phantom pageantry had been.

So, when the hopeless mariner, long driven
By the implacable winds of adverse heaven,
Beholds the slacken'd sail—the breathless air,—
He stands a silent picture of despair :
Reclining, then, his burning brow, he tries
To see some shadow on the seas or skies.
In vain ;—the vault is blue, and calm, and clear—
And, for the sea—not e'en a wave is there.
He thinks of home and of the pleasant shore,
And dreams of places he shall see no more ;
Then round him Fancy flings her fickle veil,
And Hope sits smiling on his features pale ;
Gay meads he sees where late the wave had been,
Flower-painted gardens, hills, and valleys green ;—

His home remember'd well,—the great elm-grove—
The walk where he had wander'd with his love ;—
The untrain'd arbour asks his care again,
And all around him youth and spring-time reign ;
Till, mad with joy, he rushes on to greet
The well-known places, and their pleasures meet :
He grasps at shadows—the delusions fly—
Nothing is near him but the sea and sky ;
Where he had thought to tread green-mantled fields,
The curling water to his footstep yields ;
The salt wave winds about him, and the groan
Of death is mingled with the sea-bird's moan.

Lo ! where aloof the priest of nature stands,
Her harp immortal in his aged hands :
By few observed, and loved by those alone
Whose souls may claim some kindred with his own ;
And, tun'd alike, the magic measures take
From the soft chords his peerless soul may wake,
Not his the music that enchains the ear,
And makes the passing traveller stop to hear ;—

Not his the war-notes that can stir the heart
Until it longs to play the hero's part;—
Not his the luscious love-song that can charm
The warrior's spirit and his rage disarm :
But he, pursuing higher aims, can find
A thousand secret meanings in man's mind ;
He can survey the vast of nature round,
And mark how many unseen joys abound,
And what philosophy the poet's eye
In the minutest beings may espy.
His soul is more of heaven than earth ;—he dwells
In thought, and drinks of Truth's unfailing wells.
Nature is inexhaustible ;—her store,
The more we take of it, increases more :
From narrow search inferior minds may deem
Barren and bare so worn and tried a theme,—
Her fountains dry—her fair proportions shown,
So oft, that they to every fool are known.
But nobler and more perfect spirits feel
That she hath yet whole kingdoms to reveal.

These to survey and all their secrets read,
Hath WORDSWORTH sought with energy indeed ;
Untravell'd regions he hath call'd to light,
And given uncounted wonders to our sight ;
But, like Columbus, he can but explore
The stranger lands that lie along the shore :
It is for others to make conquests round,
And gain the continent that he hath found.

Behold the bard whose mystic songs may claim
The proudest jewel in the crown of fame.
Wild and uncertain, see, he sweeps the strings
Of melody, and o'er the music flings
The earnest aspirations that he feels,
The depth of thought his every word reveals.
Fearless, he follows his eccentric flight,
At will inspiring terror or delight ;
Fickle imagination leading now
Through fairy dells where pleasant rivers flow ;
Now through those regions dim and undefin'd,
Where, in its horror, dwells the maniac's mind.

And, like a brooklet in a mountain born
Whose shaggy brows the mist's gray locks adorn,
Strangely from him the tide of numbers goes,
And wears such various faces as it flows,
Now rude and noisy, dashing down the steep,
Now to the sun its sparkling pearls upleap ;
Here garrulously babbling to the wind,
There chain'd and pent—there wand'ring unconfin'd,
Now, with much turmoil, through some narrow way
Rolling, where shades shut out the eye of day ;
Now battling with the rough uncivil stones,
Now gaily uttering most melodious tones ;
Through one rude place in unsmooth stream it sweeps,
On one sweet spot in waveless quiet sleeps,
Now, with soft lapse, where shrubs and flow'rets fair
Shed their rich breathings on the burden'd air,
It glides deliciously ; and now again
O'er some bleak waste, bare heath, or barren plain,
It rolls, where clouds and hoarp mists are found,
And a half darkness dreadful reigns around,—

A doubtful glimmering, just enough to give
To shadows shapes and forms of things that live,—
Darkness—than which far better were the gloom
That shrouds the dreary dwelling of the tomb.
In these dull regions the most transient thing
That rides the wind, or floats upon the wing,
Becomes a mystery and a doubt; nor less
When it glides over fields of fruitfulness,
Doth it reflect a thousand various hues,
Sport in the breeze, and drink the falling dews.
Now down it sinks, and, through the depths below,
Where thought can scarcely follow, doth it flow,
And thus o'er heath and vale, through storm and shine,
By doubtful passes and o'er meads divine,
Now smooth, now rough, now singing merrily,
Now hoarse and harsh, now hymning to the sky—
Child of the mountain tall, the brooklet goes,
And so the minstrelsy of COLERIDGE flows.

Turn we to him, the bard of love and wine,
The ladies' poet-laureat,—wit divine.

The priest of woman, not of nature—yes—
There is no nature in his prettiness,
Love's minstrel, whose soft lute hath learn'd to wake
Th' infectious flame that young affections take;—
Whose delicate fancy doth delight to find
Similitudes in things unlike, and blind
To their unsuitness, whensoever he sings,
Weaves in one verse the most incongruous things,
Beautiful still, although his beauty is
All shine and show, his excellence is this:—
Art he can so much decorate, that we
Forget the artist in the imagery;
Place him upon an eminence sublime,—
Tell him to view the backward halls of Time,—
The vast of space, with worlds all studded o'er—
The mind's dark kingdoms give him to explore,
And he would labour at the task in vain,
Rest his tir'd wings, and try to soar again.
But, be it his upon a sparkling eye,
A snow-white lid, a dimple, or a sigh,

To tempt the harmony of song, he tries
 His pinions' strength with new-found energies :
 In his heart's blithesomeness he trips along,
 The flowers of Fancy's gay parterre among,—
 Sips, like a butterfly, the nectar rare,
 And wanton revels in the beauty there.

But who could thus portray each one of those
 That the vast scribbling company compose ?
 Thousands my pen must pass unnoticed all,
 And some must take the Muse's morning call,—
 A card and compliments.

I pray you look

Where laureat SOUTHEY grasps his ponderous book,—
 His book !—Oh, heavens ! his library ! for why—
 The modern margins make a history
 Of little matter, and can elevate
 A penny ballad into volum'd state.
 Unwearied man, whose soul-inspir'd page
 Reflects an added glory on our age,—

As great as good, pursue the path of fame,
And with fresh laurels crown thy honour'd name.

Behold where yonder stands the queen of song,
A monstrous crowd of worshippers among,
Who make up half the multitude of them,
Whose jingling drivel no reproof can stem.
See where they all before their idol bow,
Each trifling gesture imitating now,
While she, aloof retiring, smiles to see
Their piteous plight and empty vanity.

Turn ye to him, the man of laugh and jest,
Where he, the prince of punsters, stands confess'd.
Most favour'd child of ever-smiling Mirth,
Long may'st thou live to make a jest of earth !—
Many and pleasant may thy birthdays be,
Ere, in her turn, earth make a jest of thee !

But who are they amid the assembly seen,
Array'd in robes of blue, and brown, and green ? —

I know them now—thus standing side by side,
The periodicals personified.
First comes the Edinburgh, with frown severe,
Proudly proceeding in its stern career ;
The learned Quarterly advances next,
And from the book of knowledge takes its text.
Two stately volumes bear their treasured store
Of foreign wit and continental lore.
But who is he, of stern unswerving gait,
Of pompous presence and imperious state ?
Upon whose face sits a satiric smile,
Much pleasant humour mix'd with much harsh bile ;—
A mingled shade of worthlessness and worth,—
Ha !—by his frown I know him,—'tis Kit North —
Kit North, the king of scribblers, Scotland's pride,
Fear'd, if not lov'd, by all the world beside ;
The cat among the literary mice,
And, as all cats should be, not over nice,—
The *poietophagos* who prowling preys
On imp-like bardlings and their senseless lays ;

The wolf among the silly sheep who try
With fangless snarl to scare the enemy.
An honest fellow, full of jest and fun,
Who wounds with smiles, and murders with a pun—
Sings a good song, and tells a better tale,
Can make the tear-drop fall, the cheek grow pale,
Or summon dimples to the sparkling face,
With equal harmony and equal grace ;
Stern and severe withal, though sometimes he
Forgets decorum and civility,—
Though sometimes partial to a Scottish pen,
And frowning jealously on Englishmen,
Still there is more of truth in him than they
Would fain believe who have endar'd his sway.

But mark the monthly puppy, surnamed “ New,”
Whose faults are many, but its virtues few ;
See, how he struts,—as strut indeed he can,—
Assumes the fashionable gentleman,
Prates, like an antiquated maiden aunt,
Tags his dull rhyme, and plies his prosing cant.

Once the choice wit, the genius rich and rare,
 But now—" Oh, what a falling off is here !"
 Compell'd to puff, and, *notens volens*, sound
 The purchased praises wide and far around;—
 Heavens! when the monthlies condescend to puff,
 What words can half express contempt enough?

Not so its rival brother.—Staunch and true,
 It cares not for the many or the few;
 Impartial and sincere, alike it tries
 The peer, the peasant, friends, and enemies,
 So just its equal hands the balance hold,
 Nor turn the scale to titles nor to gold.

See yonder motley multitude with books,
 Where lords and footmen, countesses and cooks,
 Three volumes bear, the spawn of sickly brains,—
 The precious bantlings of a winter's pains,
 Here one presents some fashionable tales,
 Another with " High Life," the ear regales;

A third, again, demands renown for what
An unsound head on folly hath begot :
While to the weakness of John Bull a fourth
Tales of *bon ton* from kitchen-smoke sends forth.
Hence, frivolous folly ! impious harlots, hence !
Panders of vice, and foes to common sense !
Libels on human nature ! shun the sight
Of virtue, fly to darkest depths of night.
So may true worthiness and wit once more
Take up his dwelling on our island shore,
The tastes ye have corrupted heal again,
And, in our novels, life and nature reign.

Lo ! where a thousand long-faced fellows stand,
Each with two weighty volumes in his hand,
Of "Memoirs," "Reminiscences," "Remains,"
The fine-spun cobwebs of unhealthy brains.
Here lives of Reverend A.'s and B.'s are met,
To the last letter of the alphabet ;
Biographies of village pastors, men
Who lived and died we know not where or when.

Scarce can a canting fool or madman die,
But brother blockheads print his history
And stupid letters, rhymes, and unknown names,
Give to the press instead of to the flames.
May not an honest fool depart in peace,
Gods ! without making books on his decease ?
Why from his tomb is torn the rotting dead,
To show the world the weakness of his head ?
The law of libel—strict enough, heaven knows !—
Why does it not take cognizance of those
Who fear not to defame departed friends,
And damn the dead to gain their private ends ?

Now all the world of fashion flocks to see
That dream of art, the “ Fall of Nineveh.”—
That gorgeous vision of a master mind,
Whose heavenward wing no critic chains can bind
To the cold dull realities that show
Where earth outspreads her home of life below,
Who would not envy such a soul as thine,
And an imagination so divine

That what before was excellence, bows down
To her rebuke, and abdicates the crown?
Immortal man! thy very life must be
Tinged with the glow of that wild imagery,—
Thine every thought a mockery of time,—
Thy days delightful, and thy dreams sublime.
Whatever furies may the sky deform,—
The eddying whirlwind and the wasting storm,—
Whatever splendour men mayhap have seen
In distant realms and ages that have been,—
Whatever heaven may have, or earth may hide
In her far lands or pathless deserts wide,—
Whatever mountainous and gigantic height,
Or doubtful cavern-depths that shun the light,—
Whate'er is grand, magnificent, and vast,
Of ages present or of ages pass'd,—
Whatever thought may frame, and mind may trace,
Can MARTIN clothe with glory, grandeur, grace.
Untitled yet, unhonour'd is his name,
And jealousy denies the dues of fame;

Though kings and emperors pay their meed of praise,*
And princes honour him they cannot raise ;—
Though other nations envy England's bliss
To be the nurse of genius such as his,
England alone beholds with heedless eye
Him who may challenge immortality.

Time was when they whose talents shone so bright,
That birth-place, country, shared the living light,—
Like suns that flame both pure themselves, and fling
Their lustre round them upon everything,—
Were patronised by princes and the great,
And won the public honours of the state.
But now, alas ! for change, the nobles frown,
And fain would thrust aspiring genius down.
Exclusives from the chosen few exclude,
Kings smile contempt, and men of place are rude.

* Three of the European potentates have, we believe, presented to Mr. Martin a memorial of their admiration of his unrivalled genius ; and yet this man is not even an R.A.—
Shame ! Shame !

What wonder, then, that they convert the pen
To ill employs and promises of gain ?
Lust pampers lust—sin, sin—the prurient page
Inflames the passions of a vicious age ;
The hireling scribbler vends his weekly mess
Of rude abuse and low-life filthiness ;—
They who should be the leaders, are the led,—
Honour hath gone to sleep and virtue fled !—
Authors, whose duty 'tis to guide aright
The public taste, now follow its false flight ;—
The prostituted pen is bought and sold,
And love of fame forgot in lust for gold.

Hush ye !—what voice among the woodland shade
Comes floating up from yonder flowery glade ?
Whose silver notes are sweeping through the sky !
What unseen minstrel makes such melody ?
It is the voice of Summer, in the woods
Speaking like nightingale, and in the floods
That flow from some soft fountain bubbling nigh,
In breathless music sending forth a sigh.

That pause again! I hear the choral song
Of forest warblers echoing loud and long ;—
I know the Summer's soft and spicy breath,
Stolen from the labyrinths of the floral wreath,—
I see the soft blue sky, as calm and fair
As if a storm-cloud never linger'd there ;—
I hear the swelling symphonies of mirth—
The pleasure and the harmony of earth,—
The sun sends down his dazzling darts all day,
And from his presence drives all life away,—
The country faints—the town is like a stove,
And drinks a thousand furies from above.

Thence, then, away—to visit sea-shore scenes,
Or make a revel amid nature's greens ;
Lo ! in the streets a silent sadness reigns,
And of their tumult scarce a trace remains ;
The housewife spider now renews again
Her subtle trade and claims her lost domain ;
The Park is piteous to behold, and none
In Bond Street show their trappings to the sun ;

Or yet, perhaps, a solitary man
Through Regent's striding swiftly as he can,
Or one fair dame, compelled awhile to wait
Till Steward sends a statement of estate ;
Bells nod and knockers sleep ; tired Echo tries
After her labours past to close her eyes ;
The squares are silent ; and the once gay west,
Doffing her ball attire, in widow'd weeds is dress'd.

Now, in a chaise four maiden sisters squeeze,
And go to bathe and breathe the fresh sea-breeze ;
Now, city wives with squalling children haste
Of ships, sea-water, sands, and waves, to taste ;
The alderman upon the grey shore sits,
And nods and thinks, and thinks and nods, by fits,
Musing of many ships that bear the wealth
Of climes that fill the purse but blight the health,
And dreams of things in the great deep that lie,
The turtle tribe or oyster company ;
Green-grocers sentimentalize, and gay
Young melting misses pant the hours away.

Some to be seen, and some to see, and some
With slavish steps at fashion's bidding come ;
Some for society, and some to wile
The time away, and some to banish bile ;
Some to seek wives, some husbands ; not a few
Who always do as other people do,
Flock to the sea, wherever bricks deface
The barren shore and make a watering-place.

So, in high latitudes, when first the light
Of the glad sunrise soars the six months' night,
When Spring approaches, borne on rapid wing,
And Summer treads upon the heels of Spring,
The wild-goose tribe from warmer climates come,
And, beyond number vast, revisit home ;
The wedge-like masses cloud the cheerful sky,
And hang a curtain o'er the day's bright eye.
They seek the rock-girt places known of yore,
Clothe the white cliffs, and fill the clamorous shore.

And now all they who fear not wind or tide,
With steam's good guidance, cross the waters wide,
To France the proud, the fickle, and the gay,
The free to-morrow and the slave to-day ;
With teeming purse and self-important stare
To view her wonders see John Bull repair ;
Enough, enough ;—it is a thankless task
The cares of thought from laughing youth to ask ;
But there are hoary parricides, who drain
From us the wealth they give us not again :
To these indignantly the Muse exclaims,
And with a curse would brand their dastard names ;
Fools, who to waste our hard-earn'd treasures roam,
Call England country, and make France their home.

Heaven help this age of steam and education !
Help, gracious heaven ! this educated nation ;
Miraculously dumb men learn to speak,
Cooks torture French, and footmen gabble Greek ;
England is one great school, where rich and poor,
Master and servant, gulp an equal store,

Of learning, shapeless as an unlick'd bear,
Ill-fashion'd, shorn of its proportions fair,
And, like Eve's apple, they who taste of it
Deem themselves Gods, and for this earth unfit.

Now, children who have scarcely learn'd to speak,
Ere they can stutter English, chatter Greek ;
Scavengers, educate at Infant Schools,
Curse while they sweep, and call their masters fools ;
Cobblers converse of politics and state,
And revolutionary tales relate ;
The mason tender lifts his laden hod,
And, with an awful oath, denies his God ;
The ponderous smiths, their strength relaxing, try
To solve some problem in geometry ;
And the unwash'd artificer, half taught,
Is sure the rulers do not as they ought.
Wonderful age !—Well did the poet sing
“ A little learning is a dangerous thing.”
Yet heedless thousands seek to pour the dose,
Drugg'd and redrugg'd, adown the throats of those

Who drink, indeed, but, knowing not its use,
Find all its evils, but its virtues lose.

But soon the broad black banners of the storm
Veil the bright sun, the summer skies deform ;
The floodgates of the heaven are open'd all,
And still unceasingly the waters fall,
Drowning the unripe promise of the year,
And blighting hopes most excellent and fair ;
The winds have bow'd the corn-ears down, and green
The long rank grass its spear-points lifts between ;
The sun denies his cheering beams, and night
Is by no harvest-moon arrayed in light ;
The floods descend ; the waters sweep away
The golden care of many a weary day.

The year grows old ; his tottering steps advance
With less light boundings down the giddy dance ;
His voice is crazed and hoarse ; upon his brow
Frowns black and withering gather fierceness now ;

As summer wanes, a still increasing gloom
Veils the dark prospect of the [days to come,
And adverse heaven from hapless Britain shrouds
Her eye of blue beneath a night of clouds ;
A thousand foul and envious vapours fly
Before the sun of our prosperity ;
And through the thick of mist Hope's lamp in vain
Sheds those glad beams that whisper life again ;
For, in the storms of doubt and terror tost,
Its cheerful rays are swallow'd up and lost :—
A harvest wasted by the flood and wind,—
Flocks perishing, and seasons still unkind,—
Trade, that is England's life-blood, ebbing fast,
Till every prospect of a cure is past,—
A monstrous debt that like a nightmare lies
Upon us, and enchains our energies,—
Rates, taxes, tithes, those burdens that would bow
The wealthiest state and must o'erwhelm us now,—
A population overgrown and poor,—
Famine's lean features at the labourer's door ;

Yet more, a mutual mistrust and fear
'Twixt fondest friends, and neighbours the most near,—
At home no money and no trade abroad—
No chance of change—no hope but in our God ;—
These are a few—a very few, of those
Unnumber'd evils that the Times disclose.

Ye who have known but luxury—whose lot
Hath always been where poverty comes not—
Whose path is strewn with roses ever gay,
From which the very thorns are pluck'd away,—
Ask you where such misfortune may be found?
Deign for a little while to look around :
See how vice reigns, how crimes the age deform,—
'Tis but the thunder that attends the storm ;—
And, if our gaols be full, oh ! Virtue can
Find some excuses for a starving man.

It is an awful season, and a cry
Not loud, but deep, comes rolling through the sky ;

The dreadful curse, the deathbed's hollow groan,
The child's shrill shriek, the famish'd father's moan,
That wan unutterable look that wears
The livery of thoughts too sad for tears,
The glazed and sunken eye, the pallid cheek,
To us in woe's most silent language speak ;
On every heart broods grimly mute despair,
And frowning spreads his broad black pinions there ;
In streets and public places neighbours meet
And speak not, or with brows of sadness greet ;
Those vers'd in village politics debate
Of threatening times and England's awful state,
And with much toil a thousand ways devise
To shift the load that on her life-blood lies ;
Newspapers, magazines, reviewers, try
To probe the wound and read the mystery ;
But all that their long-searching yet hath found
Is that there is a most enormous wound,
But where or whence they seek to learn in vain,
And for a healing medicine vex the brain.

What wonder, then, that everywhere vice reigns
And little of our ancient worth remains ?
Nature's first law, spite of philosophy
And moral maxims, man will still obey ;
The wounded steed nor rein nor bit may bind,—
Onward he flies, as lawless as the wind ;
The gentlest bird will wage unequal fight
When her young brood is tortured in her sight ;
And man will murmur when the vulture fang
Of ravenous hunger wakes the deadly pang.
What woe is his who views the faithful wife,
Star of his home and beacon of his life,
His dearest little ones, whose smiles are bliss
To him—their tears reflected back in his ;—
These to behold slow sinking in the grave,
With none to help, to succour, and to save,—
To mark the eye that tells of woe within,
The cheek, once blooming, now so pale and thin,—
To hear the sob suppress'd, the stifled cry,
The undetermin'd moan of agony,

The breathless language of the pallid brow,
The look of love with fear commingl'd now,
And then to feel—to know—that one short hour
Might snatch the victims from the tyrant's power,—
That 'tis for him but once to tempt the toils
That thieves devise and share the swindler's spoils,—
But once—and then, Hope whispers, he may fly
The fatal path and foul society ;—
But once—and wife and children yet may live,—
Nay—is it sin such kind relief to give ?

Love lends him wings, but Virtue still denies
The nerve, the necessary energies,
And, ere the night-bell tolls the hour of one,
Though done unskilfully, the deed is done ;
He flies, as if a demon were behind,
Guilt on his brow and horror in his mind ;
The dearly purchas'd pittance, with a groan,
He portions out among his lov'd, his own,—
But for himself—he cannot taste : his heart
Is not yet harden'd to the villain's part.

Nor are such scenes as few as sad.—Alas !
Even the flights of fancy they surpass,
And, while such wretchedness and want abound,
In every street and alley will be found.

Lo ! where a woe-worn miserable band
Weep a last farewell to their native land !
See how they linger on the shore, and sigh,
Look on the calm of heaven and wish to die !
Love parts with love and friend is torn from friend,
Sires on their sons a gaze of anguish bend,
And weeping matrons in their weakness wear
The unutterable aspect of despair ;
The breeze is up—the canvass spreads its wings—
The eddying whirlwind through the cordage sings,—
From their first youth's fond home and mother
earth,
The well-remember'd places of their birth,
They go, to seek another sun and soil,
Where peace and plenty may reward their toil.

Yet who, to wander through our streets, would
deem

The crowds that meet there other than they seem !
Alas ! what passing stranger would suppose
That want was veil'd beneath such glittering clothes,
And that the gay and gorgeous things he spies,
Like bright-hued insects, from the dunghill rise ?
The servant emulates his master's state,
Wears his white gloves, and curls his foppish pate ;
The hungry half-starved tailor struts away,
His form and fair proportions to display ;
Spruce serving-maids and milliners appear,
And lady C.'s last Paris fashion wear ;
Yet, to be thus, life's very food they lack,
And pinch the belly to adorn the back.
Abroad array'd in splendid mockery come,
While Famine shows her haggard face at home.

Two things have bow'd the pride of Britain down,
And she can perish by two things alone !

A too great luxury and a monstrous debt,—
And, 'spite of preaching, they oppress us yet.
The first, alas! what prayers, what tears may stay
The fearful flight, extending every day,
Till all ranks taste the intoxicating cup,
And, mad with joy, the very dregs drink up.
And for the other, curses light on thee,
Thou murderer of our prosperity!
Assassin of thy country, that too late
Hath found in thee sealer of her fate.
Thou awfully immortal man! how much
Will hapless England weep thy tyrant touch,
And how posterity will brand the name
Contemporaries crown'd with deathless fame.
Illustrious thief! who, robb'd of future years,
And spent what we must pay in groans and tears!
Mistaken man, oh! who would envy thee
So infamous an immortality?

Survey earth's many kingdoms—mark them all,
How every nation hath its rise and fall;—

The rise illum'd by the illustrious shine
Of all the virtues that are most divine;
The fall, accurs'd with every vice that fills
The awful catalogue of human ills.
When she was virtuous, Rome subdued the world;
When vicious, from her high estate was hurl'd
With certain tooth, though seen not by the sense,
Can Luxury sap the loftiest eminence,
And, like the plague, her touch we do not feel,
Till livid spots display death's dreadful seal.
By luxury was proud Nineveh laid low,—
Babylon's great gates she open'd to the foe,—
When she assum'd the diadem, Greece fell,—
And prostrate Persia own'd her potent spell.
Earth is another name for change; naught here
The pride of fortune may for ever wear;
Seasons revolve; each year enjoys its spring,
When youth and vigour waken every thing;
Then the maturity of summer, strong
In conscious nerve,—nights short and sunshine long;

Next autumn's undetermin'd shadows steal,
And the dull march of slow decay reveal.
Then winter—sunless winter—darkly reigns
On the once laughing valleys, woods, and plains;
Himself, like baffled foe, again to fly
When spring, awaking, opens her blue eye.
With empires so : the proudest of them all
In length of Time's unwearying flight must fall;
Their summer, winter must usurp, and spring
Will thrust out winter's desolating wing;
And hope and fortune must depart—return
And go—and come—to all the earth in turn.

So, in the lapse of ages, fail we must,
And all our pride be level'd with the dust.
It may be that yon loud and harrowing cry
Is hapless Britain's first expiring sigh,
The harbinger of dissolution nigh.

With wrapt and abstract eye, methinks I gaze
Through the dim portal of the coming days ;

I hear the voice of wailing and the shout
Of barbarous tongues grey rains round about ;
I hear the rush—the multitudinous roar,
As of huge billows beating on the shore ;—
I see, I see the slaying and the slain,
And thousands warring for their homes in vain,—
Desolate places and dismantled walls,
And grey moss growing in the festal halls.
I see, reclining on a column stone
Of an enormous city left alone,
Britannia, weeping for her children's fate,
Her wither'd hopes, and ruinous estate.
A scorn and mockery shall she be, and men
Of her great empire will hear doubting, then ;
Or, at the best, her rise and fall will be
A brief but moral tale of history.

Such fate is ours ;—but whence we cannot know
Or when—the dart may be impending now.
The virtues of our rise are fading fast,
And vice and luxury threaten death at last.

What, then, may ward the brooding ill—avert
The coming pestilence, and heal the hurt?
Or, if it cannot wholly cure, at least
Instruct us how to bear the burden best?

These, these alone ;—to summon yet once more
The sister virtues to our island shore ;
As from his sleep the lion starts again,
And shakes the pearly dew-drops from his mane
Awake ! arise ! and, with an awful cry
Rend the dull fetters linked by luxury ;
Banish ignoble pleasures from the land,
Rouse the proud heart, and nerve the trembling hand
Be fearless—firm ;—for fortune favours them
Whose stern career her frownings cannot stem,
And, above all, (for in the sky a storm
Shows the first shadows of its frightful form),
Be calm—be peaceful ;—uncomplaining bear
The passing wrath and tumult of the air.
Remember that ofttimes a brighter day
Succeeds the wasting tempest's war array,

And that a huge hurt, sternly borne, is less
Than the least scratch endur'd with fearfulness.
With arm and soul surround your laws—your throne—
Whose interests and safety are your own ;—
Be wakeful, watchful, sober, calm, and kind,
Of well-strung body and undaunted mind.

So, in a ship upon the boiling sea,
Where winds awake the waves tumultuously,
And the black banners of the tempest ride
Upon the air, o'er heaven's face floating wide,
Though danger threaten and despair assail,
No eye is tearful, and no cheek is pale.
Silent, but firm, the watchful sailors stand,
And all obey the captain's stern command ;
And thus, while lash'd by winds and tempest-toss'd,
Each anxious mariner maintains his post,
Till, calm returning, and the danger past,
They find the haven of their hope at last.

Reader, adieu ! perhaps, if you approve,
We may again claim patience of your love.
Ere yet another year hath fled away,
Many strange things will meet the eye of day,
And never-failing folly will have made
A thousand new creations soon to fade.
To catch and paint the transient hues of these,
Again shall be my task, if you so please ;
But, if the trivial work you like not well,
With seasonable compliments, farewell !

THE END.



